

REMARKS

Claims 60-80 were pending with claims 72-78 and 80 withdrawn from consideration. By the present response, claims 72-80 have been canceled. Thus, upon entry of the present response, claims 60-71 remain pending.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 60-71 contain allowable subject matter, as noted on page 5 of the Official Action.

ELECTION/RESTRICTIONS

The election of Group I, claims 60-71 and 79 is hereby confirmed. Non-elected claims 72-78 and 80 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and reserving the right to file a divisional/continuation application directed to the subject matter of claims 72-78 and 80.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Information Disclosure Statement submitted in this application by First Class Mail on March 5, 2004, and that accompanied the Request for Continued Examination has not yet been acknowledged by the Examiner by return of an initialed Form PTO-1449.

It is respectfully requested that the status of the above Information Disclosure Statement be acknowledged by the Examiner in the next communication. Further, initialed copies of the Form PTO-1449 are requested. For the convenience of the Examiner, a copy of the March 5, 2004 IDS listing the three submitted references

and a copy of the USPTO stamped postcard evidencing receipt is enclosed. Also enclosed are a copy of the previously submitted Fan et al. article and a copy of the previously submitted Gao et al. article.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 79 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,250,984 on the grounds set forth on page 4 of the Official Action. Claim 79 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and reserving the right to file a divisional/continuation application directed to the subject matter of claim 79. Therefore, the rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner feel that any issues remain, it is requested that the undersigned be contacted so that any such issues may be adequately addressed and prosecution of the instant application expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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